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TAGS: KMDR OPRC OIIP ETRD BR

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQ: SECTARIAN VIOLENCE; WESTERN

HEMISPHERE: VENEZUELA'S UNSC CANDIDACY; SAO PAULO

¶1. "Reminiscent of Vietnam"

Liberal, largest national circulation daily Folha de S. Paulo (10/21) editorialized: "When the US invaded Iraq in March 2003, some analysts dared to compare the action to the US's disastrous intervention in Vietnam. They were immediately called irresponsible, and their reasoning was discredited. Today, President George W. Bush himself admits a parallel between the two wars. For Bush, the recent intensification of Iraqi insurgents' actions is aimed at opposing the US public opinion to the war, as the communists successfully did almost 40 years ago. It is not only an increasing portion of the US population that is questioning the war, but also the generals.... The new diagnosis has emerged following a 22% increase in the attacks since the beginning of the Islamic month of Ramadan three weeks ago.... The sensation that Bush involved the US in a terrible quagmire when he launched the attack against Saddam Hussein is spreading. The situation in Iraq has only worsened ever since. And now the US cannot use the same strategy it used to withdraw from Vietnam, of proclaiming victory and leaving. A possible US disengagement in Iraq would lead that nation to disintegrate, with global and regional geopolitical repercussions, all of them contrary to US interests."

¶2. "Chvez and the UN"

The lead editorial in center-right O Estado de S. Paulo (10/23) commented: "The impasse in the choice of the new Latin American representative in the UN Security Council has shown that President Hugo Chvez's influence reached its climax and is now declining.... Guatemala accepts a compromise solution [of giving up the candidacy in favor of a third nation], But Chvez doesn't. He wants to enjoy a UN position from which he can inflict the greatest harm possible to the US. And if it is not possible, he wants the US to humiliate itself publicly. To withdraw Venezuela's candidacy, he demanded from President Bush a declaration freeing the nations to vote as they wish. Obviously, the US ignored such a proposal because it would disrespect the more than one hundred nations that have voted for Guatemala.... It is not only the nations of Europe, Africa and Asia that have refused to support a government that plans to use a position at the Security Council to systematically oppose Washington. Latin American and Caribbean nations have also felt discomfort with Chvez's posture.... The Lula administration's diplomacy, which has been unusually lenient vis-à-vis Chvez's authoritarian methods, has kept quiet.... The current GOB's diplomacy doesn't see that Chavez's radical opposition to Bush cannot and should not interfere in the permanent and harmonious relationship Brazil must have with the US.... The Latin American

representative at the Security Council must foster cohesion and defend the region's common interests and positions. In other words, it cannot be Chvez's Venezuela."

McMullen